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ABSTRACT

Two junior high schools for enrollments of 800-900 students each (Grades 7-12), are being constructed concurrently with an instructional materials center, a multipurpose building, and a vocational school on a 150-acre site in Johnson City, Tennessee. Each school is to have its own principal, assistant principal, counselors, secretaries, and aides. English, mathematics, science-health, and social studies will be taught in each school. Other subjects such as Latin, modern languages, art, reading, and a strong offering of prevocational and occupational courses will be taught in the central complex area containing a little theater, the instructional materials center, the cafeteria, and the physical education facilities. Such a school-within-a-school complex is designed to provide all the economies of a large school and at the same time maintain the closeness and personal touch of a smaller school. (Author)

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National Association of Secondary School Principals
March 20, 1972
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School Within A School

Liberty Bell Educational Complex

by
Tyson L. Jones

The School-Within-a-School plan evolved from the recommendation of the Superintendent and staff that a centrally located school would have definite advantages over a neighborhood school. These may be enumerated as follows:

1. A more varied and productive educational program could be provided at a lower per unit cost.

The new junior high schools will be developed as schools within a school. This would eliminate practically all the claimed disadvantages of large schools. In a nutshell, the School-Within-a School concept would provide all the economies of a large school, and at the same time maintain the closeness and personal touch of the smaller school.

The School-Within-A-School: How It Will Work For Us

Two schools which we will call X and Y, having enrollments of 800-900 each, are at the present time being constructed along with an Instructional Materials Center, Multi-Purpose Building, and a Vocational School on a site of one-hundred-and-fifty acres or more.

Each school will have its own principal, assistant principal, counselors, secretaries, aides, and other necessary personnel.

English, mathematics, science-health, social studies will be taught in each of the two schools.

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In the central complex area the following subjects will be taught: Latin, Modern Languages (7-9), Pre-Vocational (Industrial Education, Homemaking), Art, Reading, Special Education, EMR, Special Needs, Vocal and Instrumental Music.

In the complex area will be located the Little Theatre, which will be used by both schools. This area will seat three-hundred. This may be used for all types of school-related programs.

Also located in the complex area will be the Instructional Materials Center. Fewer duplications of materials will be necessary, and a larger quantity will be available to more people. This area may be opened to students in the evenings.

The Multi-Purpose Building contains the cafeteria for the two schools, and the physical education facilities, including a regulation swimming pool. The large gym area may be used for athletic events, community programs, banquets, and the seating capacity will be seven-thousand.

The swimming pool and many of the physical education facilities will be made available to the community during summer months.

The curriculum will be based on the objective of providing a program of quality education for each student to be served. A strong basic program of fundamental education will be augmented by an exceptional co-curricular program of a variety of activities.

Students identify with different parts of the total school program. They must become involved in one or more special interest activities in order to become motivated to do their best, and to get the most from their opportunities. Some identify with science, math, speech, art, band, orchestra, glee club, student council, and vocational

occupational subjects. A strong intra-mural program for girls and boys, as well as sports activities, will be available along with the inter-school sports program.

2. This will allow us to maintain the common school concept: All the children of all the people have identical learning opportunities.

This is one of the ultimate objectives of a democratic society. It does not mean that all the students will be run through the same program. It does mean that each child will have opportunities to develop his own individual talents to maximum of his potential.

3. Social, cultural and economic differences will be minimized.

4. Transportation problems will be lessened.

5. Zoning problems are eliminated.

6. Economy in food preparation - one kitchen will serve both schools.

7. The school is centrally located and easily accessible to all areas of the city. Many civic and community functions will be held in the Multi-Purpose Building, as well as in the other buildings located in the complex. Ample parking space will be available.

8. Since schools X and Y are located so near our present high school, students transferring to our junior high schools could take courses offered by our high school that would meet their needs. Likewise, students in high school needing junior high credits could be assigned to junior high classes. We have at present more than fifty students in this category.

9. The new vocational plant will cost one and one-fourth million dollars. It will expand our career occupational offering by about twenty-five percent.

The technical aspects of the curriculum are being expanded, such as industrial electronics, machine technology, and health service.

The junior high offering will consist of pre-vocational and occupational courses in the areas of general metals, gas engines, auto mechanics, electrical trades, health occupations, vocational guidance, placement services, and others.

Making a living has a high degree of value to man today. Our career-oriented program provides our students many new opportunities as they endeavor to find the rightful place in the society in which we live.

All education is career education, or should be.

Evaluation

The present curricular offering of the two junior highs has been successful. Limitations have been placed upon our program due to inadequate facilities. Emphasis has been placed upon meeting the needs of those having great potential as well as those having learning difficulties.

Students are grouped according to achievement and ability in mathematics, science, and English. Students having physical or mental difficulties have special classes which meet their needs. These include classes for the Educable Mentally Retarded, Cerebral Palsy, students needing hospital care, and those having special learning difficulties.

Testing is another way of measuring the achievement of our students. Stanford Achievement Test results show our students

above national norms in the areas of paragraph meaning, word meaning, spelling, languages, science, social studies, and average in the area of mathematics.

Our program has been successful in reducing the number of students retained each year. During the school year, 1970, only five students were retained in the ninth grade, nine in the eighth grade, and ten in the seventh. This is less than half the number retained during former years.

The drop-out rate is the lowest in the history of our school. During the last two and one-half years, five students have been classified as drop-outs.

The Vocational School program has offered the students of our area an opportunity for learning an occupation. This has been beneficial and rewarding to each student as he finds his place in the world of work. We hope to continue the important parts of our present program and to broaden and enlarge our offering so that the needs of those not attending college will be met.

The evaluation of a school program must be continuous. Changes in curricular offering must be made, not just for the sake of change, but to meet the changing needs of society. The industrial development of our area has changed our philosophy. Today our Tri-Cities area is fast becoming an industrial complex. This has been made possible by TVA power, human resources, and many other geographical and economic factors conducive to industrial development.

Future Development

Our disciplines will be organized into four quarters of nine weeks. The reorganization of our courses of study has received

major emphasis during in-service, faculty, and departmental meetings.

Another important factor will be the organization of grades 7-12 into a career-oriented curriculum. The four areas receiving emphasis will be the Academic, Technical Academic, Career Technical, and Career.

This program will necessitate more work on the part of guidance counselors, teachers, parents, and administrators as all endeavor to help each student find the program that will help him develop his highest potential in whatever undertaking he may choose.

The present vocational school facility is expected to take care of the needs of our students for five years. Many of the programs will be changed to meet the needs of the students and the area which we serve.

The Liberty Bell complex has been designed to meet the educational needs of our city for several years. When the need arises, a third junior high will be added, and space has been provided for this near the present junior highs. Changes in our city by annexation or other developments could alter existing conditions at any time.

THE SECONDARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM

JOHNSON CITY, TENNESSEE

OBJECTIVE - PRODUCE PRODUCTIVE PEOPLE

THE PRESENT SECONDARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM ORIGINATED FROM THE PLANNING OF NEW FACILITIES THAT WOULD REPLACE THE TWO ANTIQUATED JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL BUILDINGS LOCATED IN THE CENTRAL CITY. TWO OTHER FACTORS THAT EXERTED AN INFLUENCE ON THE CURRICULUM DESIGN WERE THE APPROVAL OF A FEDERAL GRANT THAT WOULD ENABLE THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW AND MODERN VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL SCHOOL AND THE EXISTING COMPARATIVELY NEW COMPREHENSIVE SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL LOCATED ON A CAMPUS OF APPROXIMATELY FORTY ACRES.

LOCATING THESE NEW FACILITIES POSED SEVERAL PROBLEMS: THE AVAILABILITY OF LAND, THE ARRANGEMENT THAT WOULD PROMOTE MAXIMUM UTILIZATION OF THE FACILITIES, AND PUPILS ENROLLED IN VOCATIONAL CLASSES FROM THE TWO JUNIOR HIGHS WERE WITHIN WALKING DISTANCE OF THE EXISTING VOCATIONAL SCHOOL WHILE ENROLLIES FROM THE SENIOR HIGH HAD TO BE TRANSPORTED.

INVESTIGATION CONCERNING THE ACQUIRING OF A SUITABLE SITE REVEALED THAT ONE HUNDRED ACRES ADJACENT THE PRESENT SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL WERE AVAILABLE, AND THE IDEA OF LOCATING ALL THE SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ONE AREA WAS BORN. AFTER A THOROUGH STUDY OF ALL FACETS RELATIVE TO A SECONDARY SCHOOL COMPLEX, SUCH A PLAN WAS APPROVED BASED ON THE FOLLOWING REASONS:

1. THE CONCENTRATION OF ALL EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES IN ONE AREA.
2. WOULD ELIMINATE ZONING AND SCHOOL OBSOLESCE.
3. WOULD OFFER EQUAL EDUCATIONAL ADVANTAGES TO ALL.
4. CREATE A PERMANENT SCHOOL SITE UPON WHICH THE CHANGING COMMUNITY WOULD HAVE LITTLE EFFECT.
5. LOCATE VOCATIONAL EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES WHERE THEY ARE MOST NEEDED AND ARE EASILY ACCESSIBLE TO ALL INTERESTED INDIVIDUALS

CONSTRUCTION OF THESE NEW FACILITIES DEMANDED THAT THE EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY AND THE EXISTING CURRICULUM BE EXAMINED AND RESTRUCTURED.

THE INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF OF THE FOUR SCHOOLS BEGAN THE RESTRUCTURING PROCESS WITH TWO PRIMARY OBJECTIVES IN MIND - (1) DESIGN A CURRICULUM THAT WOULD MEET THE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF ALL THE SECONDARY STUDENTS AND (2) DESIGN A CURRICULUM THAT WOULD DEMAND MAXIMUM USE OF THE NEW FACILITIES.

DRAWING ON THE INPUT FROM THE PAST FIVE YEARS OF DISCUSSION, PLANNING SURVEYS AND CONSULTANT SERVICES, THE GROUP CONCEIVED THE IDEA OF A NINE WEEKS, FOUR QUARTER PLAN AS THE BEST PLAN THAT WOULD HELP THEM ACHIEVE THEIR PRIMARY OBJECTIVES. SOME OF THEIR REASONS FOR THIS CHOICE WERE AS FOLLOWS:

(1) ALLOW MAXIMUM USE OF ALL FACILITIES.

(2) ALLOW FOR GREATER PROVISIONS IN MEETING NEEDS OF GIFTED STUDENTS.

(3) ALLOW GREATER CHOICE AND FLEXIBILITY OF CONTENT.

(4) INSTRUCTORS COULD DEVELOP OWN MATERIALS.

(5) ELIMINATE SUPERFLUOUS CONTENT.

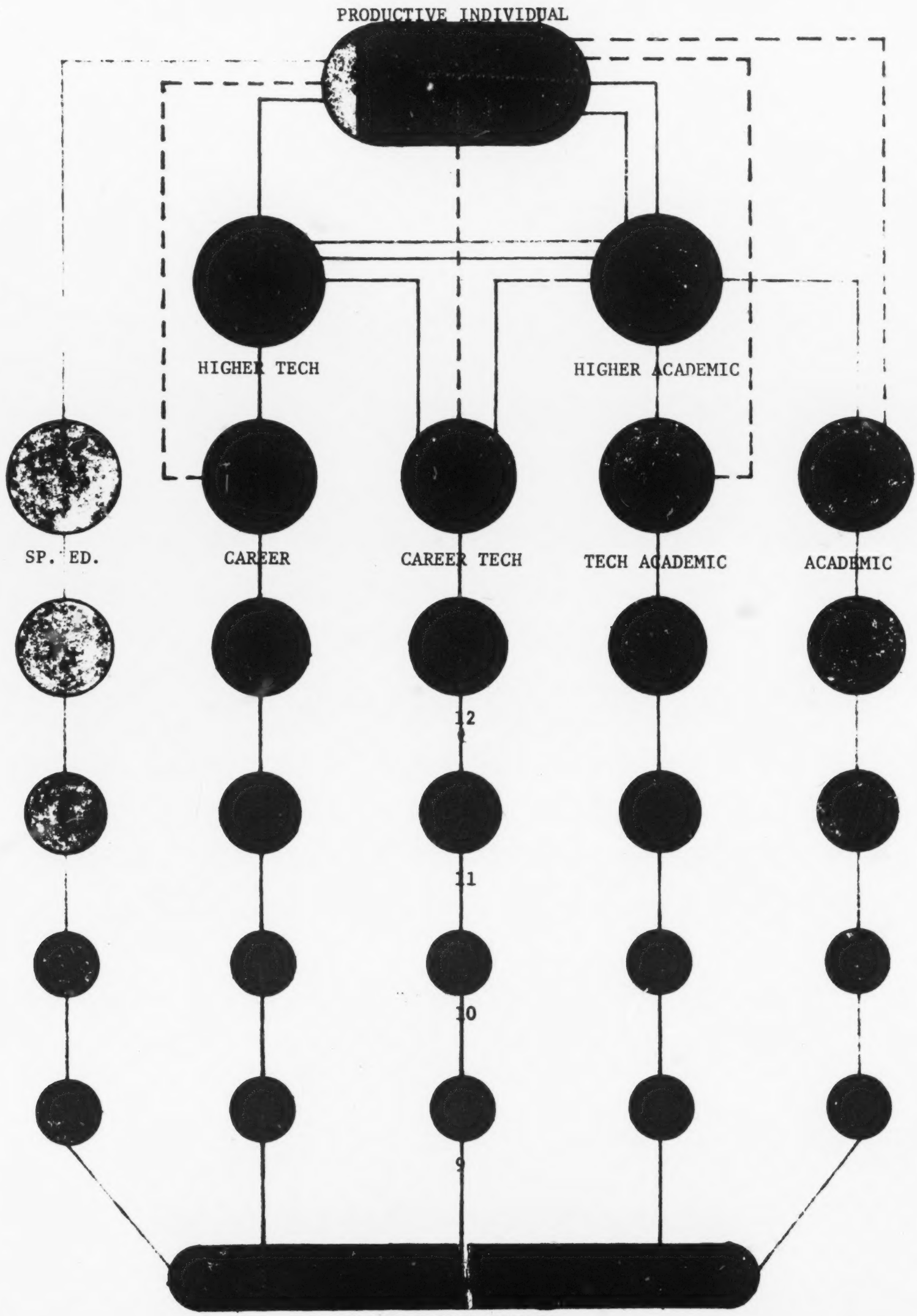
(6) ALLOW THE INDIVIDUAL A CHOICE.

(7) PLACE GREATER EMPHASIS ON TECHNICAL VOCATIONAL AND CAREER EDUCATION.

THIS NEW CURRICULUM IS NOT A TRACK CURRICULUM BUT IT ATTEMPTS TO PLACE PUPILS IN SITUATIONS WHERE THEY CAN PROGRESS AT THEIR RATE. THE CURRICULUM IS FLEXIBLE IN DESIGN; THAT PERMITS PUPIL TRANSFER FROM ONE FIELD OF INTEREST TO ANOTHER WITH NO APPARENT HARM TO PROGRESS.

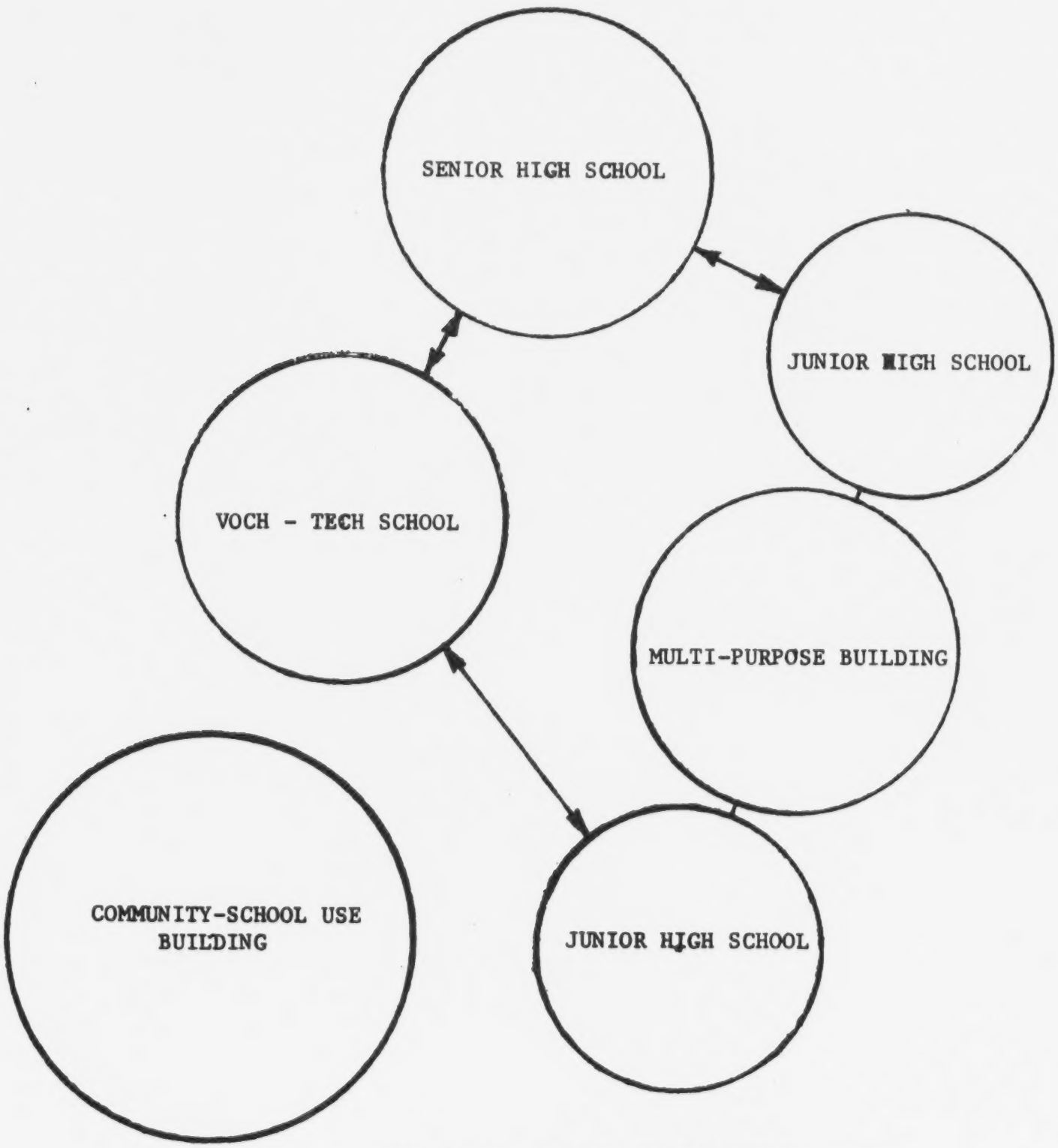
THE CONTENT CONFORMS TO THE RULES AND REGULATIONS SET FORTH BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IN REGARD TO REGULATIONS CONCERNING THE AWARDING OF DIPLOMAS.

THE FOLLOWING TRANSPARENCY IS AN ILLUSTRATION OF THE CURRICULUM.


PRODUCTIVE INDIVIDUAL
HIGHER TECH
HIGHER ACADEMIC
SP. ED.
CAREER
CAREER TECH
TECH ACADEMIC
ACADEMIC
12
11
10
9
7 AND 8 EXPLORATORY

SECONDARY SCHOOL COMPLEX

JOHNSON CITY, TENN.



FACTS AND FIGURES

PUPIL POPULATION - 3,000 +
CAMPUS AREA - 150 ACRES
COST - $13,000,000 +